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for several miles and many interesting specimens obtained. On the return journey, the buried city of San Juan Teotihuacan, thirty-two miles northeast of Mexico City, was visited, together with the maguey plantations and cactus thickets so abundant in the vicinity.

"Orizaba, at 4,000 feet elevation among the mountains of the eastern slope, was our next collecting base, and here the ravines and coffee plantations yielded many interesting specimens. The weather, however, remained a little too cool for some forms of fungi, and it was decided to seek lower elevations while the rains continued. Accordingly, we went to Cordoba and from there south to Motzorongo, 800 feet above sea-level, where the conditions were ideal. Another trip was taken to Xuchiles, between Motzorongo and Cordoba, and collections were made in the coffee and banana plantations of the Rio Blanco. This whole region about Cordoba is of great botanical interest and is easily accessible by railways running in four different directions.

"A full descriptive account of this expedition, illustrated with original photographs, will be published in the *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden* for March."

Adjournment followed.

MARSHALL A. HOWE,
Secretary pro tem.

OF INTEREST TO TEACHERS

SCIENCE TEACHING

The address of Professor John Dewey, before Section L of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Boston is reprinted in *Science* for January 28, 1910. The gap between "scientific specialists and those who are interested in science on account of its significance in life" is mentioned, and attention is called to the fact that those interested in "securing for the sciences the place that belongs to them in education feel a certain amount of disappointment at the results hitherto attained." The one great cause suggested for this failure is thought to be that science is "taught too much as an accumulation of ready-made

material with which students are to be made familiar, and not enough as a method of thinking, an attitude of mind, after the pattern of which mental habits are to be transformed." Two of the most serious difficulties that confront the educator are the number of sciences and the "indefinite bulk of the material in each, making it seem as if the educational availability of science were breaking down because of its own sheer mass." In the secondary school the rival claims of (1) a little of a great many sciences, (2) a good deal of one, (3) a combination of one exact and one biological science, and (4) full option of one to three sciences from the six or more given have not helped in the solution of the main problem. Attention is called to the fact that laboratory methods do not of themselves influence the pupil or student; that one's mental attitude is not necessarily changed because he handles certain tools and materials. They are part of the ritual—and too often only that. Dr. Dewey further states that "the future of our civilization depends upon the widening spread and deepening hold of the scientific habit of mind; and that the problem of problems is therefore to discover how to mature and make effective this scientific habit."

German foresters are importing larch seeds from Montana and white pine seedlings from Ontario.

Evaporation experiments made with cotton or wax spread over evaporating surfaces of saturated blotting paper (*Science*, March 18) have led Professor Wiegand of Wellesley to conclude that plants may "make use of waxy coverings when transpiration is to be retarded at all times, and hairy coverings when it is to be retarded only if exposed to strong dry winds and sunshine."

The United States government spends about two cents an acre on the national forests. Germany and Switzerland, it is said, spend one to two dollars an acre. It would seem, therefore, that the appropriations for the coming year should be increased, instead of lessened; and increased not only as a gross sum because of

the larger area to be cared for this year, but increased sufficiently to give a higher sum per acre.

In the February *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden* attention is called to the danger to buildings from the dry rot (*Merulius lacrymans*). It has not "been recognized in this country as it has in Europe and builders have been allowed to use unseasoned wood to a large extent. A recent investigation in New York City by Professor I. H. Woolson, of Columbia University, brought to light an astonishing condition of affairs in a great number of wooden buildings, which may collapse as did the Gledhill factory unless speedily repaired."

A recent paper by Haven Metcalf calls attention to the fact that the chestnut disease (*Diaporthe parasitica*) "ordinarily gains entrance through wounds, of which the commonest are the tunnels produced by various bark borers. Such wounds as these are always moist, and hence favorable to the growth of any spore." This bark disease shows "no definite relation to the points of the compass, as the location of lesions is determined by the position of the wounds through which the fungus gained entrance. In small, smooth-barked trees, death may be prevented by a system of inspection and cutting out of diseased tissue, somewhat similar to that practiced with pear-blight. On large, thick-barked trees this is impracticable, as it is impossible to distinguish disease lesions under the thick bark."

NEWS ITEMS

Dr. G. Haberlandt of Graz has been appointed to the chair of botany at the University of Berlin.

Professor Alexander Agassiz, the naturalist, died of heart disease, March 27, while returning to America on the *Adriatic*.

Mrs. Eliza Caroline Bommer, widow of the botanist J. E. Bommer, died January last in Brussels. Mrs. Bommer was known chiefly for her work with ferns.